

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The present response is submitted to place the present application in condition for allowance based on the indication of allowable subject matter in the outstanding Office Action. In the outstanding Office Action claims 1 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. patent 5,521,590 to Hanaoka et al., claims 15-20 were allowed, and claims 2-14 and 22-26 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge that indication of allowable subject matter.

By the present amendment claim 1 is amended to incorporate limitations from dependent claim 3, and thus amended independent claim 1 corresponds to previously pending dependent claim 3 rewritten in independent form. That subject matter was noted as allowable in the outstanding Office Action. Thereby, amended independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 21 is also amended to recite limitations from original dependent claim 3, and thus is also believed to also now clearly recite allowable subject matter.

Thus, by the present response each of independent claims 1, 15, and 21 are believed to clearly recite allowable subject matter, and thereby those claims, and the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

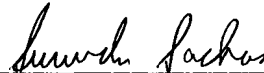
Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

EHK:SNS\dt

I:\ATTY\SNS\24'S\245785\245785US-AF.DOC



Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Surinder Sachar
Registration No. 34,423